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Letter dated 21 March 2005 from the Permanent Representative of Luxembourg to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to bring to your attention the statement issued on 21 March 2005 by the Presidency of the European Union (see annex) concerning the evaluations that the European Commission has carried out in Liberia.

I should be grateful if you would arrange for the present letter and its annex to be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Jean-Marc **Hoscheit**
Permanent Representative of Luxembourg to the United Nations

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Annex to the letter dated 21 March 2005 from the Permanent Representative of Luxembourg to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: English, French and Spanish]

Statement concerning the evaluations that the European Commission has carried out in Liberia, issued on 21 March 2005 by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union

The European Union is closely watching the situation in Liberia, which is at a particularly crucial point in its transition process.

The long years of civil war, systematic looting of resources and atrocities against the population have left significant scars and had a considerable impact on the stability of the whole Mano River region. Now that peace has returned, reconstruction of the country has begun and demobilization, disarmament and reintegration programmes are being implemented, every effort must be made, above all by the Liberian authorities, to enable the country to regain the political, economic and social stability necessary for its development, thus enabling those who are still displaced to return home. In this context, the European Union would point out that no form of impunity can be allowed and those responsible for criminal acts of any kind must be brought to justice, to answer for their actions. Stability is also essential for the welfare of the region's people and for their economic future, to enable them to emerge from the vicious circle of poverty.

The holding of elections on 11 October 2005 will mark a turning point. Given the organizational and logistical problems still to be overcome, the European Union calls on all political forces and on the Liberian transitional authorities as a whole to cooperate with one another in order to ensure strict compliance with the timetable and framework for the conduct of those elections.

Together with its international partners, in particular the United Nations, the United Nations Mission in Liberia, the United States of America, the Economic Community of West African States and the African Union, the European Union is committed to making a considerable effort to this end. At its meeting on 21 March 2005, the International Contact Group for the Mano River Basin will consider many development challenges still faced by Liberia, including the need to complete the country's disarmament, demobilization, rehabilitation and reintegration process.

The European Union also calls on the Liberian authorities to shoulder their responsibilities and to ensure that all of the country's resources are put into its reconstruction and into building its economic future.

The European Union expresses very grave concern about the commitment of Liberia's transitional authorities and political forces to overcoming some of the main unresolved problems, in particular the corruption brought to light by recent reports and evaluations. Some recent information, verifiable on the ground, has shown a significant level of corruption, largely going unpunished. Such corruption damages both the image of the country and the ongoing democratic process and could jeopardize the conduct and international recognition of the elections.

The acceding countries Bulgaria and Romania, the candidate countries Turkey and Croatia,* the countries of the stabilization and association process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro, and the EFTA countries Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, align themselves with this statement.

* Croatia continues to be part of the stabilization and association process.